

NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
VIRGINIA FIELD OFFICE



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FARMERS STILL HAVE TIME TO BE COUNTED AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE **Census of Agriculture Forms Still Being Accepted**

The deadline for returning completed Census of Agriculture forms may have come and gone, but it's not too late for Virginia farmers to speak up for their communities, their industry and their future. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reminds farmers that their voices are important and need to be heard. As a result, Census responses are still being accepted.

"A strong agricultural industry is a critical component in having a strong U.S. economy," says Herman Ellison, Director of the NASS Virginia Field Office. "By providing town planners, community leaders, lawmakers and individual farm operators with the most comprehensive and accurate U.S. agricultural reports, they have the resources to make informed, sound decisions to ensure a solid future."

The deadline for submitting the Census forms arrived on February 4, 2008, and many farmers have responded. However, the remainder of those farmers who did not turn in their information by the original due date will receive another copy of the form in the mail to give them another opportunity to respond.

"Accurate and comprehensive information from all farmers is important, so it can provide a true picture of where U.S. agriculture is today and help people plan appropriately for it's needs in the future," says Ellison. "This information is only gathered every five years, so we need the participation of every farmer to ensure they receive a planning tool that will provide them with the most benefit and value."

Census responses are required and protected by law. This law safeguards the privacy of individual responses. Farmers can return their forms by mail or fill out the Census online. For more information about the Census, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call toll-free (888) 4AG-STAT or (888) 424-7828. The Census is your voice, your future, and your responsibility.

Find agricultural statistics for your County, State, and the Nation at www.nass.usda.gov

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